

OLD DAYS
RECALLED

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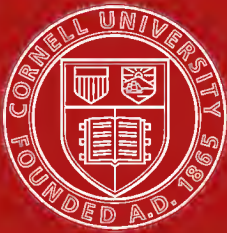
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OLD DAYS RECALLED



*Mr. John Elsey
Master of The North Northumberland Foxhounds*

OLD DAYS RECALLED

by
JOHN CLAY



CHICAGO, 1915

PREFACE

SOME months ago I contributed to a leading live stock paper a reminiscent article about my early days in Canada. Like ivy, my memory had clung to little incidents, simple in themselves, but which, when strung together in a story, seemed to interest the public, for the little brochure found its way through various newspapers into many hands. Quite a number of letters also came to hand and one friend said, "You give us too little of this class of work. It revives old days, brings back scenes to mind, works on the imagination, and is an incentive for our younger generation." The heading of the article was the name of a steer born over thirty years ago, but the able editor blue-penciled the plebeian name and inserted "Great Days Recalled." Following up this thought I sit down to depict some of the scenes, and to describe some of the people who filled the stage of my early days in a simple country that knew little of the great outside world.

J. C.



Leading in
the Crop



Self-Binder
at Work



Harvesters at Dinner



Number One

Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountain's lone;
The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loophole grates where captives weep,
The flanking walls that 'round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.

—*Marmion*.

THE river Tweed, rising among moss hags, gathering strength and force from countless rills that come from heather clad hills, at last breaks away from them, and leaving mystic Melrose behind, weeping almost as it bids adieu to the Eildon hills and sainted Dryburgh, flows in gentle cadence past Kelso and Coldstream, till at Berwick it is lost in the German Ocean, that North Sea upon whose bosom as I write many a wild drama is being enacted. By its shores are pleasant haugh lands, rich and prolific. Gently, by wide sweeps of swelling uplands, the vale is left and you rise with varying landscapes to beautiful hills on either side. Then it leaves the old bridge at Kelso and wanders through a rich vale, level to the eye, densely wooded as you look at it from some vantage point, but in reality full of rich farms and lovely homesteads. Here the river is the boundary betwixt England and Scotland, at least after it passes Kelso by some six miles. On the English side lies north Northumberland, land of romance,—for here in glorious greenery is Flodden Field. Ah, yes, to us Scotch folks, fatal Flodden; romantic Ford, its castle standing amidst glorious woods; and then Norham, noblest of them all; and far away over the mere is Holy Island where Constance de Beverley paid the penalty of illicit love. I see the great breakers, curling their silver foam, dash 'on the yellow sands at Bamburgh, and rush wildly across the shallow, sea beaten fens of Budle Bay.

North of the Tweed, opposite Northumberland, is the How of the Merse. It is a level tract of land, eighteen miles long and from ten to twelve miles wide, possibly more as it breaks

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into the Lammermoor hills. Almost in the center of this romantic vale, near to Ladykirk, redolent of Shorthorn lore and of a Stuart's liberality, at least legend says so, it was my good fortune to be born. My father and forefathers had farmed a lot of land in this and the adjoining counties. They were wedded to the soil. Some would break away, but as they were prolific in their day and generation, there was always a good crop of farmers among them. They rented land, occasionally they aspired to own some; and that generally spelt disaster, for few men possess the ability in Great Britain to farm their own property successfully. Exceptions there are to every rule, but in our case when my kinfolds purchased land they began going downhill. As a big family, with many ramifications, with outshoots in nearly every corner of the globe, our family tree showed up very strongly in tillers of the soil—renters of land, many of them growing rich and affluent in long years of strenuous work in the valleys and on the hillsides of the Borders.

And so it came that my father when he was just over twenty-one years of age, settled down to the family calling. Down in the lowest spot of the Merse he farmed 523 acres of land. It was stiff, heavy land, like glue in wet weather and brick under summer suns. But catch it right,—which took patience,—and it was prolific. In my early memory it was wet, with big open ditches that worked slowly and none too well. Bare fallow covered with a coating of farm yard manure was followed by wheat and then clover.

In my great grandfather's days it was cropped as follows: oats, bare fallow, wheat, clover, oats, turnips, barley, clover,—the eight course shift. There was a field or two of old grass, or possibly the clover was grazed a second year, but it was substantially worked on the above shift. My father first managed the place, then succeeded to the lease on the above gentleman's demise. He commenced on little capital, but he went at his work with energy. Fifty years afterward he retired, so to speak, going to the capital of Scotland to live, but he retained two of his farms and was as busy as ever. The farm was almost square—south of it east and west ran a main road. Parallel to this another road ran, and then north and south it was intersected by another road seldom used except for farm work, but kept up

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by the county. In this way it was splendidly served. The steading stood on the latter highway and was excellently adapted to the wants of the farm. A quarter of a mile away, amid a grove of trees, musical with birds in spring and summer days, stood the farm house, the old square building that haunts me with a thousand pleasant memories. I see it now as I write, its windows with white blinds half drawn, flashing back the evening sun; the green lawn, the old time garden, the small conservatory. Down in the cow pasture the lark was making melody, blessing as it were with amorous notes her little home amid the grass.

Golden hours those, when the farmer with his wife and family took their evening walk in the long twilight of those northern climes.

Long after the sun had gone, even when the afterglow was deepening into the silent twilight, they would come back across an old grass field kissed with dew and soft under foot, the ruddy touch of glorious health on every cheek, and then when the lamp was lit books came out and there was silence. Lastly, at nine o'clock the big family Bible was placed on the table, a chapter was read, prayers were said, and then the simple supper of bread and cheese and butter was discussed. The younger members of the family went to bed. The parents had their hot Scotch. It made their tongues wag a bit, although they only brewed once, and then meagerly. The day's doings were discussed, old stories were told, some castles built and hopes expressed, and sometimes in imagination we sailed away to shores that in later days some of us have reached.

Curb with gentle hand the swelling waves of youth, quench not the burning fires within an honest heart reaching for greater things as it looks into the future! It is a long way over the plain, across the river, up the green hillsides to the pinnacle of success, but you reach the goal if there is honesty of purpose and stern resolve. That was the text in our home. It was explained hour by hour, and then at last came good-nights and peaceful sleep.

My grandfather, who was eighteen years old in the year that the battle of Waterloo was fought, and which ended the meteoric and terrific life of Napoleon, used to tell many tales of the strenuous days that as a youth he passed through in the

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old seaport town of Berwick-on-Tweed. Its citizens and the yeomen of the surrounding country were ready to spring to arms. Europe was exhausted and Great Britain was for the time being paralyzed. His father had made a fortune in wheat. He bought in the fall and winter, stored it in granaries, dried it by turning it over weekly,—for it lay in bulk,—and then shipped it to all parts of the country by sea, for railroads were not dreamed of in those days. If you visit the old Border town today, away in back alleys you will see some of the wheat lofts, now grey and grim, standing as silent monuments of almost forgotten days. Below the ground, like catacombs, are cellars that once on a day were full of claret, port and sherry. Farming was at a low ebb. Money was scarce and wages meager, and so they continued for many years.

But there was a cloud in the horizon. The French Revolution and the wars which enshrouded it, which produced the archfiend of modern days, a historic rival of Alexander and Caesar, had set the cautious, conservative and long suffering Anglo-Saxon to thinking. The false gods of the Georgian age were being shaken to the foundation. The shocking morals of kings and courtiers, the semi-slavery of the middle and lower classes, the extravagance of the rich, the pathetic poverty of the poor, all led up to a fierce onslaught on men and methods which during the struggle for national existence had full swing. On the Continent of Europe blood had flowed and flowed copiously while things changed there, but in Britain it was a silent, bloodless change. It was born of nature, helped by science, and blossomed in the Victorian age.

Two great currents in national life met about the year 1832. In that year the first reform bill was passed. This extended the franchise. The second was the application of steam to the locomotive. Not even the prophetic Moses viewing the world from Nebo's lonely top could have foreseen the evolution of those mighty factors in the life of a nation. The honesty of Grey and the genius of Stephenson started in the British Isles that ball rolling which with increasing volume has been felt in every country and clime. Other countries have prospered even more than she, but the birthplace in the north of England of the great motive power that now circles the globe led on and

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amplified that freedom of thought which perhaps is more evident among the English speaking race than any other class of people.

My father's recollection took him back to the day when about eight years of age he crossed the fields of the farm upon which he was born to the little village about a mile away where a dinner or similar entertainment celebrated the passing of the Reform Act. The farmer and the well-to-do middleman were given a vote, a voice in the government of their country, but over forty years passed before the artisan and the well educated peasant acquired the same privilege.

Those were hard days for the farmers and their employes.

In 1846 the duty was taken off wheat as the flag of freetrade was hoisted, just as a great railroad boom collapsed. Matters were worse than ever and continued more or less in the same condition till the American Civil War. My father saw that a small lowland farm was in the first place too small for his energy and natural desire to expand, and, further still, the way pointed to a great expansion in the live stock business. New grain fields were opening up. The American wheat fields and the vast granary of southern Russia were being exploited and developed. So another farm was taken in Lammermoor, a hill and a half hill farm, sound of soil, prolific of grass and purple heather. It was a gold mine in its way, for it was capable of great development. It reacted to the plough, the tile drain, the use of lime and the cultivation of the turnip. Stone walls grew up by magic and the grey bent turned under bloomed with splendid crops.

About this time I came upon the scene, and I remember as if it were yesterday the resistless energy that made two blades of grass grow instead of one. On the lower lands Leicester-Cheviots found a congenial home, while up where the heather bloomed the hardy Blackfaces grazed the year round. Days never to be forgotten or effaced from memory!

Down in the lowlands there was skillful maneuvering. The weather was everything. Touch not the land when it was too wet, hurry forward your work when the season was favorable, but up on the hill farm the soil was light, friable, and easily handled. You could not insult it under any conditions. One

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you had to study like a pampered child who had, however, great possibilities in its nature. The other you could abuse and it would always come up smiling.

The farmer spent from the middle of September till June on his lowland place, the balance of the year at his other holding; and so it came about that my early life during the summer months was spent on the rising slopes of the Lammermoor hills. They rose gently, almost imperceptibly, from the level lands below. Gradually you went from fields of clover, turnips and golden grain to sweeps of heather that in August bloomed with purple hue. There was a fragrance in the air that seemed to electrify both body and soul.

Under foot was the springy heather, knee deep at places; and then there were boggy lands intersected with sheep drains that carried the water away, and instead of rushes, acres of fine grass took their place.

The hill sheep, guided by instinct, came every morning from the heights, cropped their way slowly to the lower lands varying their food morning, noon and night. From these sheep drains and moss hags came little rivulets, dark colored, that gradually found their way to channelly beds, and gathering strength became streams, birthplaces of mighty rivers. How they sparkled and sang and whiled away the merry hours over stones and rocks, through stretches of heather, cutting deep courses through pleasant meadow lands, where gaudy butterflies flickered from flower to flower; where larks reared their young, singing joyous songs between their family duties; where the corn-crake, like a will-of-the-wisp, led you a merry dance and no results.

Down below the old farm house, across a grass field, over a rustic stile made by projecting pieces of rock in the stone wall was the bathing pool.

Those were the days when youth was at the helm and pleasure at the prow, days of endless joy.

When you were tired of swimming and splashing your neighbor, you guddled for trout and many a speckled beauty came to hand. Instead of using a towel you ran a race on the bank, nature's drying machine, and then after dressing you would probably continue the day's fun and amusement by taking your rod in hand and follow upstream where hungry fish lying

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under banks or at the tail end of streams waited for food. There was a touch, the line straightened and on the bank lay a wriggling, struggling trout. The hook came out and in went the prize to the willow basket.

When Sunday came we were marched off to church. How tempting the pool looked from the bridge where we crossed the stream! It seemed cooler and more pleasant than usual, as the old birch branches hung gracefully over it. It seemed to babble louder and sing more cheerily than ordinarily and the silver foam, churned as the dark brown stream came leaping over tiny rocks, glistened in the sun. Even the peat reek had a finer incense and the sun shone brighter as leaving the bridge we walked up a grass covered road, guarded by solemn pine trees. And so with heavy hearts we toddled behind our elders, through pleasant fields, across strips of wood and a bit of moorland where shy sheep grazed, and on to an ivy-covered church around whose door in little groups the members and their families were gossiping. My father generally interviewed the minister before the service, but we solemnly, under the guidance of my mother, filed into the church down the aisle to very uncomfortable seats on the west side of the pulpit.

It was a cold, callous sort of place. The shadow of an iron time, of Covenanting days, hung over it. The seats were arranged with prison-like precision. They were stiff, hard, straight up and down and very uncomfortable, but withal the hearers slept many an hour as the earnest divine expounded the Scriptures. Many a year has slipped past since those days. Most of the listeners and the sleepers have crossed the Great Divide, but those Sabbath days are printed deep in my memory. Not in a thousand years could one forget them. It was a solemn day. The birds sang gaily, the streams sparkled and sputtered over their pebbles, the gentle breeze with odors borne from heather hillsides came pleasantly through the sighing pine woods; all nature seemed gay, from bleating lamb to noisy rook, except mankind. There was no laughter in the air, no song of joy and then as a sort of cold douche, the naturally light hearted, rather humorous minister had to preach about the miserable sinners of this world and the awful catastrophies that were to happen in the next.

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The austerity of that Scotch Sabbath led on to revolt in later days, not to atheism or infidelity, but a rebound from the strict formality, the censorship of other people's morals and ways of life. To illustrate the perverse ways conscience could look at things, you were doomed to a cold dinner after your spiritual feast, but there was no trouble in getting all the hot boiling water necessary from the kitchen to make hot Scotch with. And so men's minds have changed and nowadays freedom floats gaily along the stream of life in Scotland. There are no regrets. The Spartan simplicity of a Lammermoor home has its consolations. The rigid economy practiced; the self-sacrifice of the parents; the self-denial towards one another; the life with nature amid the silent hills and the well remembered streams atone for that rigid Presbyterianism which at the time was a thorn in the flesh.



The Blacksmith
Shop



Clydesdales



Fording a Stream



Number Two

"A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring."

SOMEWHERE in the year 1802, there was born in Scotland a man, Hugh Miller by name, of lowly birth, who after a very slender education became a stone mason, but who, as the years rolled on, gave to the world some great books, among them "The Old Red Sandstone," and "The Testimony of the Rocks." "My Schools and Schoolmasters" was another, a story of entrancing interest, written in simple language, the record of a similar uplift as the lot of Lincoln.

Every man and woman too goes through the same experience. Miller's vivid imagination and fervid fancy clothed the events of his early life with a realism, and yet a modesty that touches your heart.

For it is not so much in the schoolroom that you imbibe your education, as away from it. The daily events as they come along form character and give strength to your mind. Men like Miller gather reliance from their struggles. With scanty food and no advantages they commence early to seek for light. Tender love from a mother's heart they often have. It is an inspiration and helps, but the boy after all makes the man and the results depend on his own efforts. A bit of luck may come, but it is generally preceded by hard work, self denial and a looking forward to greater things. In this country where every man has to work, the boy born in a log cabin, who has to do the chores, is far better fitted for the fierce battle of competition than the spoon fed college lad. The former imbibes an experience which the latter can never have, and so I am always thankful that my early life was spent amidst simple scenes where economy and thrift were practiced and held up as virtues.

There are always incidents in a man's life that are graven deep in memory, and although I have hazy ideas of events further back, yet the one that comes up as a vivid picture of my first great experience and deep sorrow is the death of a brother.

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He was a little chap, just three years old when scarlet fever took him away. He lay for several days very sick in the nursery, an old fashioned room whose walls were covered with pictures cut from illustrated papers. We tried to amuse him, but in vain. The pallor of death was written on his brow; the tender cheeks covered with touches of pink grew white as the disease progressed. The whole household was in agony and silent grief. The end came early one morning. At dawn the other children got up. I happened to go into the kitchen.

There by the fireside was an old woman, grey of hair but strong of face. In days gone by she had been nurse in my father's family and she had been called in before the undertaker, who was the local carpenter, came upon the scene. She sat by the fireside where the breakfast was being cooked, and she was telling a servant how easily the little boy had slipped away to the Great Beyond.

"You needna' get ready for skule the day, Laddie," was her remark. At breakfast every one was in tears. Even my father, iron-willed and strong of build, broke down. The grey dawn broke into daylight, for it was midwinter. The carpenter came, the little body was incased in a black coffin studded with brass tacks. It was placed in the drawing room. That night before we retired we took a last look at it. It was a weird farewell in the sickly light of a candle, for we used nothing else in those days. Next morning my father took the little coffin and contents to the family burying ground, some sixteen miles away.

When I go back there in these later days, look at the head stones, reading on them the story of days gone by, the whole scene comes back with graphic realism. The declining village, with some modern cottages, a few "buts and bens" with thatched roofs, the quaint church surrounded by the kirk yard, God's acre, the green mounds under which lie the village folks for generations back, the old worn tombstones with stories of the dead written over them, many of them weather beaten, scaling off and falling into decline. A sad, sad scene, telling of past glories and no certainty of that life eternal which hoping mankind wishes for. In the afternoon of which the little boy was taken away, the minister under whom we worshiped came to call. He was a dark, swarthy man with a keen brilliant eye set in a

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noble head. His manner, while reserved, was kindly and dignified; a man who had gone through much sorrow, so that in this case he could comfort the distressed. He sat in the darkened room and talked earnestly, touching with mellow tones the dread subject of death, which like a thief in the night had entered this pleasant home. And then he opened up a vision of other worlds to come. With the hand of an artist he lifted away the heavy clouds, made rifts in them and peeps of sunshine chased away some of the shadows. And as the afternoon wore on, the candles lit and the tea table covered with spotless linen was surrounded by the family, the sombre morning was softened with a touch of warmth from the good man's heart. On me those hallowed days left an impression that can never be effaced. The radiant glory of the minister's eye flashing like a sun-kissed jewel, still revolves around my conscience which lies at the bottom of a sea that no man can fathom.

For many years Scotland has taken a leading place in the world's affairs. Her Spartan upbringing in a cold, inhospitable country and clime centuries ago tended towards the survival of the fittest. She was almost continuously at war internally or externally and her men and women became heroic in their way. When the days of peace came a hundred years ago, she settled down to take the best out of agriculture and commerce. She was religious, intensely moral, with a grip on the Sabbath Day, and anything else she could lay her hands on. But nothing interfered with business. As the home country grew too small she branched into foreign lands. Thrift, skill, tenacity carried her sons to the front. Aside from the inheritance of these splendid qualities, there was another reason. It was the education she provided in her parish schools and finished up in her universities.

Those schools, often very crowded, again sifted out the best. There the earnest student got his reward. The loafer naturally was left behind and the clever, quick, industrious child got the most attention. The masters were human and they spent their best talents where the results would show to most advantage. The herd laddie, the ploughman's son, the boy from the big hoose met on equal terms, and they had to reach the goal under similar conditions. The man who can read, write and count has

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enough of learning for commerce. After he has acquired the "three R's," his further education is in his own hands. And it is in commerce that the Scotch have won their spurs in world contests. They have shown up well in art, literature and divinity. They



JOHN CLAY IN 1860

have put a Raeburn against a Rembrandt, a Burns against a Horace or Goethe, a Knox against a Luther. In these they have done their part, but upon the ocean, in the mine, in the world of steel, in every line of business they excel and the tap root of excellence has been the old fashioned, now out of date, parish school.

To one of those parish schools when I was just past six years old it was my lot to be sent. Every morning a bright eyed, rosy cheeked girl of about fourteen years of age took me along with her. Our path lay over the same road, as we went to church. We trod the same velvet paths across fields where shaggy Highland cattle grazed, where larks sang and the stock dove cooed, where dragon-flies and bees and butterflies drew life from tender flowers that decked the greensward. We all met in the one room with a low ceiling, where a gray-haired old gentleman with a wise look struck fear into our young hearts. Of those days I have only a dim recollection. At noon time we all went to the bathing pool in a little stream some half a mile away. My progress must have been slow, because one night when my father and the schoolmaster were enjoying a tumbler of toddy, possibly more than one, the latter expressed himself as follows in regard to a question about my ability. He said: "To tell you the truth, sir, the laddie is slow at the uptake and I doot when he grows up he will only be fit for the plow." The good old man when he retired from his scholastic duties became a farmer in a small way at a place called "Holett's Ha," (the hall of the owls), and he spent the balance of his days there.

My second, and really first effort at schooling was at the parish school of Whitsome, a little village in the county of Berwickshire. There my father and other ancestors had attended. On my advent, John Turnbull was the master and as there was a large attendance an assistant had to be employed, but it was

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the old man that did the most of the work. He was a sparely built man with a keen intellectual face, thin hair hung over his temples. If it bristled a bit, then look out, for the tawse went that day and they were needed. The boys especially were unruly. Many of them who worked during summer on the farm and attended school in winter were almost grown men and it took the old dominie as much as he could do to handle them when the rod or strap was administered. He seemed to go demented sometimes and little wonder when you look back on the

Paid and Date		1-14/2
Oct 25	Alum	3
26	Slake pencil	1/2
Dec 9	Copy	2
27	Slake pencil	1/2
Jan 11	Schoolmaster's Catechism	1/2
Feb 2	Slake pencil	1/2
10	Copy	2
26	Fishes on card	1/2
March 1	Slake pencil	1/2
April 9	Slake pencil	1/2
16	Copy	1
24	Slake pencil	1/2
Sum 5 th Received payment of		14-40
Wm. L. L. L.		

FAC-SIMILE OF BILL FOR EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES

job he had on hand. He had, as I found out in later years, a fine nature and he raised up with the help of an economical wife a splendid family. On the playground the tests of strength and contests generally were West against East. Sometimes a fight developed and I remember once a boy from our farm was chosen as the eastern champion in a fist fight. The western boy gave him an awful licking. He blubbered all the way home, some two miles, and as we trudged along by his side we all thought the world had about come to an end. On the other hand, as this boy had bullied the small chaps for a long time he did not get much

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sympathy in the following days. The village was the center of an agricultural community, pure and simple. Farmers, stewards, shepherds, ploughmen, women workers—bondagers, they were called in those days—made up ninety per cent of the working people. Large families were the order of the day. No race suicide here. They were a grand stamp. The men well built, above the average height, the women strong, healthy, vigorous, and they in turn produced children who grew up like father and mother. Of luxury there was none, of wholesome food scarcely enough. The clothes of the father descended to the boys, those of the mother to the daughters, and even then in large families there was scarce enough to go round. Many an old suit or worn dress my mother handed over to the folks at the Raw, and in a few days it appeared, or at least a part of it, at Whitsome school.

As I look back on those days I scarcely know how the people lived. There was a fine old character called Nannie Tait who had been left a widow with a half dozen sons, more or less. The eldest son drove a pair of horses, and the second boy also worked, the others went to school. As we came home at night and passed their humble cottage, boy like I lingered with them. By the fireside was a pot of potatoes simmering, fine mealy spuds they were. When the boys appeared the mother mashed them up, put in a pat of butter, some salt and pepper, placed the pot in the center of the floor and there spoon in hand we dived into this dish. That was their supper. In the morning they had porridge, at noon a piece of bannock, and sometimes a flitch of bacon.

Those scenes have left an indelible impression on my mind. As I write they seem a moving picture before my eyes. In the morning, you left the pleasant house and, gathering neighbor boys and girls as you went along, we looked like a young army when we reached the village and marched through to the school. Sometimes I rode on a Shetland pony instead of walking. That pony had a hard job. It generally had to carry two boys and a lot of others hung on to it. Sometimes it lay down, occasionally turned sharply round and ran homewards. Anyway, it managed to get quit of its burden and in this way registered many a kick against injustice. The village itself was ever interesting. It consisted of one street and intermittently ran for nearly a mile.

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There was nothing romantic about it. In old days I suppose it was a meeting place for people to trade, barter their goods before the days of money changing. Away back in those days of barter it was the central spot to do business at. I often smile at the way people talk against Wall Street, the Chicago Board of Trade or the Stockyards. They are merely the places people find it convenient to trade at. You must have central points at which to do business as Venice had its Rialto. And so at the above point there was a blacksmith, carpenter's and baker's shops. Old Willie Smith, who had a wooden leg, kept a grocery store. Jimmy Grieve, the shoemaker, also kept a public house, one trade not being enough for his wants. There were two carpenters in the village, while Tom Brown the roadman lived there and radiated from that point for miles around. The school and the auld kirk with its manse and a farm at each end made up the hamlet. It stands there today as it did fifty years ago. Most of the neighbor villages have declined, but this one, never having had a boom, stands the test of time.

My next essay in the way of education was at Duns. This place was not the legal, but the commercial capital of Berwickshire, although in these latter days it is both. It is a sleepy old town, resting under the shadow of the Lammermoor hills, but it is substantial, well built and around it are many beautiful country houses. It is the reputed birthplace of Duns Scotus, one of the most learned men of the 12th and 13th centuries. In my days James Wood was his prototype, so far as learning was concerned. Wood was one of a large family who had been brought up in a shepherd's shieling by an upright, skillful father. Several of his brothers made names for themselves, but to me Old Cuddie, as we irreverently called him, was the center of interest for four years. He was a big man, physically and mentally, but inclined to be lazy and careless, more especially about his money matters. Withal that, he could ding (to use a local phrase) a lot of information into your head. He had all the characteristics of a first class dominie. He was well up in his subjects, very domineering in the class room, a bit of a tyrant, inclined to favoritism, versed in invective, which he used with more freedom than discretion. He was honest, but he lacked judgment. Those faults were fortunately left behind in the school-room, and in

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the house and on the playground he was affable, pleasant and companionable, a bit of a Bohemian, loving in moderation his glass and reveling in a good song. In the fast passing years I often think of him and believe with his abilities he deserved a better field. He had about twenty boarders, mostly farmers' sons from the vicinity and about the same number of day scholars from the town. His work was not in vain, for from his school many a man went into the world and made his mark.

In this school, as in most others, you had to fight your way. All boys were equal and you soon found your place. It took a fight occasionally to define your standing. You got lessons in self-reliance and that fighting spirit which if used with judgment in after life is invaluable. In the school room you got a general smattering of everything. You came away from the place a sort of Jack-of-all-trades and master of none. Specialties there were few, generalities in plenty and for the business man probably the last state of affairs is better than the first. You have foundations on which you can build in the long days to come.

Dear Old Cuddie, with boyish tricks we oftentimes tried your heart! And yet memory steals with pleasure back to those days when we robbed an orchard, skated over the lake among the stately woods at Duns Castle or threw a fly over the sparkling waters of the Whiteadder. Take me back to those days, touch with gentle fingers the harp of youth, let me hear once again the notes that float across the mellow moorlands whose silence is only broken by the curlew's screams and the challenge of the blackcock.

After four years at the above place, I was sent to Abbey Park, St. Andrews, where James Smeaton, a prince among disciplinarians, held undisputed sway. There were other masters, other pawns upon the board, but everything revolved round the old man, as we called him. If a father had a boy who was a real hard case, he generally landed at this school. It was a sort of factory for purifying sinful boys, for taking the kinks out of crooked human sticks, and after a year in this house of boyish correction you came out as near perfect as human hands could make you.

Smeaton believed in the rod and he sometimes wielded it with fiendish glee. Some boys got it every day, others escaped.

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Fortunately, I was in the latter category. He had three sets of leather tawse—heavy, heavier, heaviest, and they were used as follows: in fall, spring and summer. In this case the last stage was worse than the first. This great master, and I use the adjective advisedly, was a human dynamo, a sort of mogul engine with a roller in front which mangled you into shape mentally and morally. He was a short, thick set man, a little bit bow-legged, with a wondrous head set on a mighty neck and broad shoulders. He picked up an average boy and shook him as a Scotch terrier does a rat. He believed in lots of exercise and plenty of good plain food, and after that, work. It was no place for loafers. His methods, his wonderful versatility, were an inspiration. He was a born leader with courage, skill, determination, and he loved the turmoil of a hundred boys struggling to attain the goal he ever kept in their view. Once while I was there a neighbor school sent a challenge for us to play our seniors at football. "No," said the old man, "we won't try you at football, but if you want a match at mathematics, come along next Saturday morning." Every Saturday forenoon from eleven to twelve o'clock we had mental arithmetic. The most of his teachings I have forgotten but the above. I have retained since then my ability to calculate quickly, not absolutely correct, but just near enough to grasp propositions and decide on them long before the clerk by my side can work them out with paper and pencil. It is an asset which has been of the greatest use, more especially in the banking line.

I never saw the old man again. Years after, thinking of the benefits I reaped at his school, I started out to visit St. Andrews and call upon him. Too late. In passing through Edinburgh I opened the "Scotsman," the great daily of the Scotch metropolis. There, among the deaths, was James Smeaton's name. Towards the end he had much sorrow and became acquainted with grief.

Fifteen years ago I went back to St. Andrews and had a glimpse of the old place. It seemed small in comparison with the castle of youthful days. Then I wandered round to look at the ruins of the old cathedral and the Abbey and the Castle. Here Wishart suffered at the stake, Cardinal Beaton was murdered as a fitting revenge. There are a thousand memories

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connected with them, the most gruesome the bottle dungeon, which if it could speak would unfold many a tale of woe and fearful cruelty. The prisoner who crossed the Bridge of Sighs in Venice never came back. And so here, close to the hoarse roar of the North Sea, was a grave where captives wept and suffered a living death.



Sowing Grain by Hand



Leicester-Cheviot Sheep



Farmer's Daughters and Pet Lambs



Cutting Hay



Number Three

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade,
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

MY early life was spent among the peasantry of the Borders. From them I imbibed much of the love of nature, a great deal of the folklore that descended unwritten from one generation to another, and further still fathomed those wells of sympathy which are found in simple hearts and forms that outwardly look rough and ragged. Joe Whitey, alias Joseph Whiteman, the Horndean tailor, clothed them in a rather rude way; the material was good, but the cut was not a la Poole or Tautz, yet beneath those homemade garments there were hearts of gold beating true to hearth and home. They were devoted to the land. Long years of healthy toil, of fair treatment, of somewhat scanty food, of caution and conservatism, had wedded them to the soil, had grafted them almost to their native parish.

Things are changing now. The railroad, the expansion of industrial concerns, the natural unrest, the present war, the telegraph and telephone are leading up to a shifting of the population of the Borders, as in other places, but at the time I write of, the old way of son succeeding father, filling the gaps made by merciless nature, was still in force. My own ancestors lie in many graveyards; a radius of fifty miles would cover the district, however, where their last resting places are, most of them within sound of the murmuring Tweed.

And so it came about that I grew up among old hands who had grown grey in the service, whose sons almost unconsciously took their fathers' places. The daughters married sons of the neighbors. "As the old cock crowed, the young one learnt." My grandfather, who farmed a place in Berwickshire called Dykegatehead, a fine farm in the How of the Merse, had a

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steward, foreman we call him in this country, by the name of Mabon. Those Berwickshire peasants are as a rule big men, great of stature, burly of form, somewhat slow of movement, but honest in their work and loyal to their employer. Old Tom Mabon, as we used to call him, was a small man, nervous, rather excitable, an indomitable worker, with a genius for handling and directing his employes. But he had a failing—he had an affinity in John Barleycorn.

In 1839 my family moved to Kerchesters, near to Kelso, and there the Mabons went also. Then it was a wild unkempt sort of place, a lot of moorland covered with heather and whins, little drainage and wretched fences. Here old Tom had unlimited scope for his energy. The tenant was hard pressed for money, for times were hard, but as my father used to say of those days, "they swattered through." But when the hour of triumph came, when neat hedges divided big square fields, when tile drains carried away surplus water and the place bloomed with clover and was golden with grain, the pleasure of an evening at Sprouston Boat House, which held a license then for the sale of liquors, was too much for old Tom. So at last tenant and servant parted. My grandfather, a blunt old man, used often to say that he made a mistake, that Tom with all his faults was better than his successors sober.

On the death of his grandfather, my father became tenant of the farm of Winfield and in his migration from Kerchesters to this place, Aleck Mabon, one of the sons of the above, went with him to fill the place of steward. He died there in 1890 and closed up a life of sixty-six years serving the same family. A marvelous record, but not unusual in those days. All around, I think he was the best practical agriculturalist I ever met. Like his father, he was a small man, wiry, with wondrous energy.

Having married twice, he had a large family. His first wife I do not recollect, but his second was, before her marriage, a maid in our house. She was the opposite of her husband, large, never excited, fond of innocent gossip, with wonderful executive ability. Her whole soul and being were wrapt up in "Mabon," as she always called her husband, whereas "Mabon" had the farm first in mind and the family came next. Many a talk my father gave him on this subject, and while at the time he prom-

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ised to be good, he soon fell from grace and began worrying over his crops and stock. He had 523 acres of very stiff land to manage. The want of a shower or too much rain did incalculable damage. Then, like every farmer, he wanted it to rain on the hay land and keep dry while he was making his turnip crop.

It was eighteen miles from our home place to this farm and my father, who always rode a bit of blood, made the journey in a little over two hours. His first place of call was the steward's house and he generally passed a few words with the wife and got the news of the week's work. If things were going badly on the farm, the news was soon conveyed to the master. "Aye, maister, Mabon's fair aff his heid. There's nae livin' wi' him, he's sae ficky." And yet withal he was cool as a cucumber in his land management. He was patient, watchful, never missing a point. After rain, when the soil was dry above but glue below, it was a great temptation to commence work, or when it was a period of drought there was a desire to lay off and do very little, but Mabon always seemed to know the moment to strike the farm anvil. Looking back, it seemed to be instinct. He was a master in the art. He seemed always to anticipate the weather. He was always ready for untoward events, and was seldom caught in a tight place. He drove his force of men, women and children when necessary, and they responded to his efforts. Then as a workman, whether it was ploughing, sowing grain, singling turnips, building stacks or any other work, he might have had an equal, but no superior, in the neighborhood. He had a further gift. As a manager of live stock he had few equals.

The farm steward in those regions, as a rule, is not much of a stocksman, but "Mabon" knew this business from the ground up. And so he lived, upright, honest, a bit talkative if he got a glass too many, rich in experience as a farmer, a fine judge of character, seldom keeping a poor ploughman, training many a boy into a splendid man, fearing no one, not even his minister. To sit at his feet was an inspiration, absorbing his knowledge, the result of long experience under summer suns and winter snows.

Another Mabon (John the groom) I have written of many times. He had neither the tenacity nor ability of his brothers, but he was a grand type of the family servant. While brought up on the farm of Kerchesters, he wandered from it in early

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youth and my first recollection of him is when he came to my father's service in the early sixties. He stayed for many years, acting as groom and gardener. Unfortunately both for him and us, his family as they grew up wished a change and left. Every time John met my father or mother he began to blubber, and after a few years he came back and remained till he died. While he was a sort of Jack-of-all-trades and master of none, he was the most faithful, honest and loyal man I ever knew.

And yet another Mabon spent his early days with us, and in after years came to Kerchester as steward. He stayed ten or twelve years and he was a good deal of a stormy petrel. He was an able man, probably in certain lines the best man in his business I ever came across. Added to marvelous energy he was quick, decisive, with keen intuition.

I had been only a few months on the farm when at Whitsunday, 1868, he appeared upon the scene. For several years before my grandfather's death he had an excellent man for steward, whose abilities, however, lay in another direction than herding ploughmen and looking after general farm work. After a year with my father he resigned and "Jim," with a great reputation for handling a big holding, came like a meteor upon the scene.

I will never forget the first morning he took command. He swept every one aside, and in a blustering way gave directions right and left. Having been born on the place and worked there in his youth, he knew every field and its peculiarities. We were making turnips in the "Acre" field, called so because in old days the weavers and other villagers of Sprouston had each an allotment there. Many of the ploughmen were new to the place and all of them strange to the steward. Robbie Herkiss (of whom more hereafter) had come as woman steward. It was a new army and the way it was drilled, started and rapidly went to work, opened my eyes. My father had instructed me to be in the field a few minutes before six o'clock to help the new organization to get into working order, but the new steward never asked for any help or suggestions. He had his mind made up what to do, and he did it. I went back to my breakfast at the house highly indignant, and was not slow to tell my father about the methods of the new man, but it only drew out the remark, "Jim was always that way and ever will be. You can't teach an

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old dog new tricks," or something to that effect. The misfortune of this aggressive ability was that he was continually quarreling with his employes, and very often with his employer. He failed to get the best that was in the farm hands and it kept the master constantly watching for outbreaks that were embryo strikes. Withal, the work went forward fast and furiously. Every night at eight-thirty Jim came to my father's library where the work of the day was discussed and that of the following day was laid out. It was marvelous how difficulties dissolved, what tricks were turned, how the labor of man, woman and horse was economized. In those days a man's wage was approximately seventy-five cents per day, a woman's forty cents, and a boy of fifteen got probably twenty-five cents. As there were ten ploughmen, two shepherds, twelve women, three or four boys and several orra men, such as woman steward, byremen, spadesman, etc., and as all these folks had separate capabilities, there was a wide field for organization. Every man, woman and child's qualifications were weighed in the scale and utilized accordingly.

I look back on those hours as the greatest educational moments of my life. Generally these evening discussions were peaceable and quiet, but occasionally they ended in a verbal shindy. My father scarcely ever lost his temper, but if matters kept going wrong the steward and he had it out and I was the witness. As old Tom and my grandfather parted, so Jim and my father did likewise. The steward and his family took a small farm and I believe did well. I doubt, however, if my father was ever so well served as in the years when this rough and tumble but able and honest man was with him. Those Mabons were the best types of the Border peasantry. They had their faults like all of us, but they were able and keen, masters of their business, Free Kirkers and Radicals, but loyal to their employers, to king and country.

As said above, in Jim Mabon's time Robert Herkiss was the woman steward. He looked after and guided the dozen young women, who were a great working asset of the farm. Those girls began their outdoor farm life when about sixteen or seventeen years of age, and they were marvelously clever at their work. At most work they were more than the equals of the men, and much more active in lighter work.

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Robbie had entered my father's service about 1856. He came as a ploughman. Originally he had been a quarry man, but the wages paid were not adequate to support a man, wife and six children. Thirty-six cents a day was almost starvation. As a ploughman, while paid partly in kind, he earned in those days about sixty cents a day and he began to prosper in a small way. He left after a few years and went to a neighboring farm. Then he came back in the above position and remained till he retired from active work. He was a tall, active man, with a fine head set on broad shoulders. He was a hard worker, with fine executive ability and if he had not been elected for a Border ploughman and eventually woman steward, he would have shone in any line of life. He was a fine scholar and historian, not in the light of a college professor, but having in his early youth mastered the "three R's," he had educated himself. He knew the Bible almost by heart and could quote copiously from it. He had Boston's Fourfold State at his finger ends, and he had read deeply on other subjects. By the side of his bunk (china closet) was a well selected library. The volumes were well thumbed and had been read many times. In his spare hours he was a grand man to have a "crack" with. He was broad in his views and although a strong church man he had broken away from the rigid Presbyterianism that in those days held the Scotch peasant in its grip. His imagination led him away into religious flights that publicly expressed would have put a heathenish brand on his brow.

In an argument on any subject he was a hard nut to crack, and in a quiet way he loved a political or religious discussion. He was too much for his neighbors, and even Jim Cowan, our old shepherd, who had an acid yet humorous tongue, had generally to call for mercy when Robbie, training his guns loaded with facts drawn from history and events of his own time, fired broadsides in the wordy battle.

In summer nights, after his supper, we used to meet and wander over the clover fields or cross the turnip drills where he and his workers had spent many hours, first singling the plants, then clearing away with hoes the weeds which the horse grubber had not reached. He gloried in a clean field of roots and from the time the seed was sown till he and his girls pulled, topped and tailed the crop, he kept an eye on the various fields that had been under his care.

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In his work he took continual pleasure. He watched how nature evolved from the soil generous crops, how in milk white hedge rows the twittering birds built their little homes and reared their young, how the bursting bud became a glorious leaf and from under frozen snows the brown grass became green again and the hoarse croak of the rook in winter was forgotten when in the long wondrous nights of June the lark, with rapturous note, made earth and sky resound with music.

When I look back, Robbie fills in my eye Valiant in the Pilgrim's Progress. His foibles, his sins, if he had any, are left behind in the vista of time. His finer qualities, his sterling honesty, his splendid loyalty, the deep mystery of his religion, his love of nature, his wealth of human kindness—those remain written deep on the page of memory, a royal rose in an old-fashioned garden that was born and bloomed and faded, and left behind it an incense that still remains after many days.

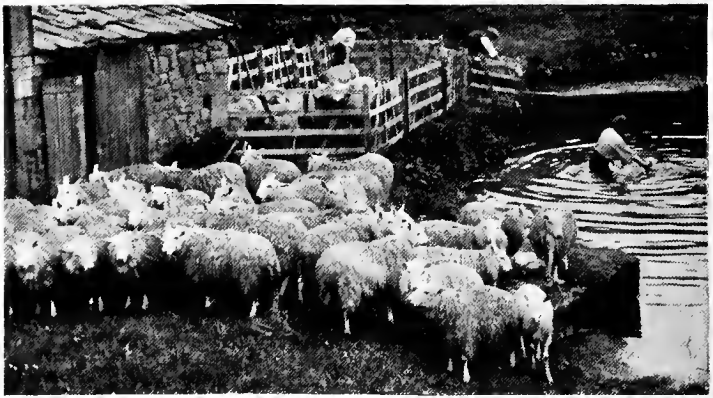
In his home Robbie had an opposite, for Eppie his wife was a woman of little education. She had raised a large family and in their years of poverty there was ingrained into her nature a thriftiness which developed year by year. Her house was always well kept, but she kept a strong hold on the purse strings. She had read little and traveled less, but she was an inveterate gossip and she knew all "the clash o' the Raw." She looked upon all foreigners as being either black or yellow. When I took back a Canadian wife after some years' absence from Scotland, the good woman, who was sitting on her doorstep, got a glance at the carriage that was conveying us from the depot to the house. After a good look she ran back to her fireside and informed her husband in a very excited tone: "Aye, Robbie, Mrs. John is no' a black after a'." When the story got out, Robbie had to laugh with the others.



Feeding Ewes and Lambs in Spring



Coming Out of Farm Yard



Washing Sheep



Number Four

"O Scotia; my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health and peace and sweet content."

FIFTY years ago the Border peasantry lived very frugally. The further from the railroads and large towns, the more simple were their lives. Of oatmeal and potatoes they had plenty, pork was in every household in limited quantities, milk was fairly plentiful, bread was in abundance, but the luxuries were scarce. Not knowing them, the want was not felt.

There have been great changes since, but we are writing of old days. The spring of 1853 my father leased a farm on the southern slopes of Lammermoor. It was away from the main road and you approached up a lane, now a well made road, betwixt strips of pinewoods, the odor of which dwells in memory. The farm was about 3,000 acres in extent. Once on a time it had been all heather and bent. Part of it had been put under the plough, but the former tenants had neglected it. They were old fashioned folks, not much inclined to work, and of energy they had none. The walls were tumbling down, the few drains were out of commission and the whole place run down. There were Cheviot sheep on the lower land, Blackfaces on the sweeping moorlands of the higher elevations.

There my young days in summer time were spent among a wonderful class of men, typical of old covenanting days, their faith resting on the Bible, which was often in their hands. They were mostly all Free Kirkers, stern, uncompromising, rich in their scriptural knowledge, bigoted, narrow and yet living up to their ideals. To them Sabbath desecration was anathema, and hell was the only resting place for sinners and a poor disturbed one at that. This leads up to a word or two of explanation.

The history of Scotland has many a tale of sorrow written across its pages on account of religious differences. The story of the Stuarts and their Roman Catholic tendencies, the invectives

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of John Knox coupled with his eloquence and earnestness, the deep-seated religious mysticism of the people, their love of liberty, which never appeared one-sided to them, although, like the Puritan in this country, it had its inconsistencies; all these accumulations left in the Scottish character a strong, deep feeling that ever and again broke out in turbulence against the powers that ruled their church affairs. The spirit of Drumclog, of the moss hags and their caves still smoldered amidst them.

The Church of Scotland endowed, but its patronage in the hands of the few, was always a subject for attack by the many. While it was the church of the people, its ministers were appointed not by them but for them by patrons who often had no more to do with the congregation than the man in the moon. Today it is the same in England, and they bear their burden meekly, but in Scotland they rose in rebellion. First the United Presbyterians went out and made homes for themselves in 1740. In 1843 another great exodus took place. It came after what was known as the Ten Years' Conflict. It developed men whose names are inscribed deep on Scottish history. Nothing in modern times, outside the realms of war, developed such a peaceful revolution. Minister and congregation going hand in hand faced a momentous change in their condition. The former had to move his family and belongings from the pleasant home where possibly he had been for years, and face the world and trust to his followers providing food and shelter. All this for religious liberty. The contest developed men. Into the limelight it brought Thomas Chalmers, whose calm logic and far seeing financial ability built up the ways and means. By his side stood Thomas Guthrie, eloquent in platform and in pulpit. Behind them, firing broadsides, was Hugh Miller, author of the "Old Red Sandstone," and editor of the "Witness," a paper that voiced the sentiments of the party. There was no quarter given, no compromise, no charity one for another. The Free Kirk folk walked out, built churches, paid their minister and worshiped according to their conscience.

Seventy years have passed. The main question was settled in 1874, and the Established Kirk folks elect their own minister. The days of patronage are gone, only they should have been

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dispensed with in 1843 and Scotland would not have been overburdened with churches which she finds hard to support in these rather degenerate days of non-church going.

So at the little homestead at Wedderlie the farm folks were strongly Free Kirkers, and in the dozen or fifteen years that had passed since the disruption bitter feelings had not been softened or differences smoothed over. As my father and mother had walked out of the Old Kirk and thrown in their lot with the New, I was brought up in this atmosphere of evangelical narrowness, for we despised the Auld or Established Kirk and hated the Roman Catholics. Unitarians were outcasts and all sects servile to the devil, except the Frees and the U. P.'s.

Time has shown that in the principle of religious liberty they were right, but they gained their end by stubborn fighting and splendid self-denial. Outside their strong religious ideas, the U. P.'s and the Frees were just like other folks in their walk and daily life. They were thrifty, keen in business, and while they would not swap horses on a Sunday, they would lay the foundation for a trade next day. One of our neighbors, when the season came to market his lambs, used to drive them so far every Sunday afternoon towards the market which was held Monday morning. This was held to be a grievous sin, but no remedy was ever suggested because it would be impossible to drive them in the dark after midnight when twelve o'clock released your bondage from sacred forms. In fact few folks knew the dividing line betwixt Sunday and Monday, for they were mostly asleep.

Still I have no regrets at having spent my early days in this rigid atmosphere. Whatever the world may say or think, these people born and living in humble homes, nursed among silent hills and by babbling brooks, had a fine moral nature that shone out in their daily life. Many of them were rich in folk lore, the stories and the songs of old days, the deeds of valor in Border life, the struggles of the Covenanters, the weird fancies of the Brownies, all descending by word of mouth from one generation to another, garnished by one and stripped by another, made life among these people interesting to the stranger who could pierce their natural reserve. As a child, I imbibed and absorbed many of these tales, and naturally became a part and parcel of their

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life. Those days are changed, and it is to be regretted. There is a sharp reaction against the strict tenets that were a part of the days before the railroad, the newspaper and cheap literature. The Sabbath day, hated by the younger generation as a day of penance, still looms up as a vast shadow over my life and has encouraged and pushed along the flight from misguided strictness to freedom of thought and possibly we run to the opposite extreme. One thing is sure. This strict training, this discipline of your mental vision, the very physical regime you had to live up to is not lost in after life. It lays a sober foundation on which you can build a virile moral edifice.

When my father entered on the lease of Wedderlie, he promoted a young lad who looked after his garden and saddle horse at his home place. At about twenty years of age Matthew Craig became the steward (foreman) on the above farm and he spent all told fifty-four years in the service, of which fifty-two were passed on the Lammermoor farm.

He was a short, thick-set man, with a fine head on rather rounded shoulders. He married shortly after moving from the Merse to the hill country the nursemaid in our family, and raised a large family who have been successful both here and in the old country. When he went to this upland farm it was in a straggled, run down condition. The old dykes made of turf were almost level, the fields were unkempt, the stock inferior, everything in poor shape.

But a new era was coming. The tenant and his steward worked together; neither of them did much by their own hands. It was organization and head work that won victories in the peaceful path of agriculture. The land was cleared of stones and these made walls four and a half feet high, which with a copestone stopped the average sheep, although there are always one or two in the flock which will get over almost any obstacle. Drains open and covered were freely cut, lime was driven and used profusely. As if by magic crops flourished, clover fields appeared and a grand class of stock grazed amid lucious grasses.

Year after year the work went on, constant, steady improvement. It was what was known as a clever place, the soil light, friable, a bit rocky and stony, but it responded to deep ploughing, lime and fertilizer. Not only was the quality of the stock im-

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proved, but the quantity almost doubled. Leicester-Cheviots took the place of Cheviots, but on the upper hirsels Blackfaces still kept their hold and proved the most profitable. Under the able management of this servant, guided by my father, this farm that had paid only a small rent under the former tenant, became exceedingly profitable to owner and lessee.

The American Civil War raised the price of all farm products in Great Britain, more especially wool and mutton, and as the farm was fairly beginning about 1860 to bear the fruit of intelligent and vigorous management, the profits were very large.

The best is got out of these hill and half hill farms during the first twenty-five years of their improvement. The soil for the most part is thin, but after being in grass for countless years, it responds quickly to such stimulants as lime and bonemeal. When the first dose of these wear off, this class of land does not respond readily, or at least to anything like the extent it does the first time. As usual, many farmers, seeing the great profits made on some farms, broke out a good deal of land which had better lain in permanent pasture and never seen the plough. The farm we write of, however, had a good deal of naturally rich, heavy land, and to the end of our occupancy, in 1905, it produced good crops. It was a sound stock place, and sheep thrived well upon it; no death loss of any moment.

Many an hour the old steward, who several years ago crossed the Great Divide of life, and I spent together. In summer days we walked across the sweet meadowlands or away where the heather in purple glow was wasting its sweetness. In the long evenings of June or July we caught many a trout in the stream that broke in sinuous course over its bed of gravel. Or perchance we bagged some rabbits round about the pinewoods that skirted the grass fields near the old mansion house. But those I remember best are the winter evenings by the peat fire in the little sitting room of the farm. They come back as I write this afternoon within sound of the sea like a winter's flood. To me they were as good as the *Noctes Ambrosiana* of Prof. John Wilson, and the Ettrick Shepherd, not so much fun and frolic, no whiskey, for that was tabooed there, at least when Matthew was present, but we had endless cracks, stories of the farm, deep draughts from the well of experience and not a little good natured

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gossip that had strewn through it a lot of shrewdness. Whenever a neighbor made a move out of the ordinary it was watched closely. If successful, it was copied. If not, there was a lot of good natured chaff. A new machine at once attracted attention, and if a horse was added to the farm stud the animal had to stand a lot of looking over and, incidentally, criticism.

If you happened to be at the place over a Friday night, you were expected to attend the prayer meeting. To the stranger within their gates this would have seemed rather a solemn affair. It was a meeting similar to the fishermen of old who lived by the Sea of Galilee. A quaint, simple gathering, where homespun doctrines were mixed with earnestness and a wondrous show of native ability. They held this meeting alternately at their cottages, and over and above the dwellers at the farm, they included those who dwelt at the "place," as it was called—in reality the mansion house of the property, seldom visited by the landlord and in my early days under a caretaker who was gardener, shepherd and general factotum, his domain taking in half a dozen or more grass parks that were let annually in April.

These cottages were above the average except where two ploughmen lived.

To me the scene had grown familiar. The house where we met had always been made tidy. You worshiped in the largest room, which generally served as sitting and dining room, ofttime used also as a sleeping room with an open fire for cooking and heating. There were the simple ornaments over the mantel, the painted china in the old-fashioned sideboard, the bedspreads variegated like a flower bed, the square table with a white cloth over it, the well thumbed Bible, the candles by whose dim light we did our best to read the small print of the sacred book. There on hardwood chairs we sat in a quiet reflective mood till the dozen worshipers gathered.

Standing out like a big weather-beaten tree, towering above its neighbors, was Henry Cockburn, the Lairds' man, a grand specimen of the Border peasant. Gray hairs covered his noble head and keen eyes shone forth "like rich jewels in an Ethiop's ear." You were struck with his clear, bell-like voice, his suave manner, his commanding presence, his easy dignity, a Chesterfield in the role of a stone dyker, a gardener or anything else you

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chose to put him at. Fate placed him there amid silent pine-woods and green fields, for his home had both around it, and he lived and died known by few but respected by all. When I think of him and Matthew Craig and Willie Anderson, one of our shepherds, I try to reason out how men of that caliber, when the world is so bare of ability, are left to work out their own and other folks' salvation far away from scenes where their personality and talents would have made them stars of the first magnitude. When the great Book of Life is balanced beyond that mysterious sea which we all must cross, will the great men with noble minds and aspirations come into their own?

"But 'tis an old belief
That on some solemn shore
Beyond the sphere of grief,
Dear friends will meet once more."

Matthew Craig generally led the service. It was very simple. One of the worshipers led the singing. Prayers were offered by various members. A chapter of either the Old or New Testament was read and remarks made upon it, oftentimes very pithy sayings with similes from everyday life and the book of nature. Sometimes one of Spurgeon's sermons was read, but the Spurgeon in the pulpit was a different thing when his words were put into cold print. The mellow voice, the gentle repartee, the earnest pleading of that master in the art of preaching, around whom every Sabbath morning a vast concourse collected, were wanting. And so with most printed sermons. The fiery eloquence of Guthrie was a tame affair when put in a book, even with a catching title.

The devil, gibbeted and hung up to dry about every second Sunday morning in the pleasant little Free Kirk at Westruther, where most of the above folks worshiped, by the Rev. James Izzett, was a vivid personal attack which woke up the congregation, but if you had reduced it to paper and ink it would have been a disjointed and somewhat erratic oration. And so while Mat's (as I still love to call him) remarks would not have stood a literary test, they came from the heart and even with the lapse of time they stand out for me as a beacon light upon which I can keep my eye on an everlasting eternity.



Blackfaced
Ewes
and Lambs



A Border Shepherd and Collies



Sheep Shearing



Number Five

"Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that reigns among the lonely hills."

THIS chapter tells of my life among the shepherds. The story reaches from the rich pastures of low Berwickshire to the heather clad hills of Lammermoor, to the green hillsides of Cheviot right up to the English edge (boundary). In this wide field you meet men of many types, nearly all of them gentle, reserved men, quiet in their demeanor till roused to action, faithful, loyal, with an instinctive knowledge of their work, the heritage of many generations. In the hill districts especially son succeeded father. It was an endless chain of families in certain districts. They might change from one farm to another, but they seldom left the neighborhood.

These shepherds stood at the top of the tree in the intellectual life of the Border peasantry. Their lives lacked the rugged work of the ploughmen, or the varied, distracting duties of the foremen. They sailed along on a more even keel, had more time for recreation in the line of reading, while in the old days when like Hogg, the poet of Ettrick, they had to watch their flocks, train them to respect invisible boundaries, for there were no fences in those days; the forefathers of the shepherds I knew in youth were, in a way, learned men.

As they lay on the hillside they had time for reflection, for reading, for communing with nature, for interchange of ideas with their equally intelligent associates. They met on the divides where their flocks grazed and many a pithy argument took place. There ran through the minds of these men a deep religious sentiment, a thread of mysticism that was born of the Orient rather than the Occident, and withal there was in their nature a lot of pawkiness and craft that some people would call cunning, not of the dishonest sort, but they did not tell you everything they knew in a day's journey. Their calling made them inveterate gossips. They had long ears and wondrous

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memories. If one of their neighbors slipped a cog there were quiet reminders for years after. A sly humor ran through their daily life, not bubbling over, but ever at play. Their outstanding characteristics were their loyalty to their employer, to the locality where they lived and the work they had in hand.

Away up in the hills, amid silent valleys or wind swept edges, they saw little either of their employers or other people, but they went steadily about their business. While "the eye of the master maketh the cattle fat," this proverb did not hold good of the what was known as the "out bye" shepherd. Left very much to himself, he manifested in his own way the faithful servant.

My father often sent me out to watch the ploughman at work, but the shepherd never. It was an unwritten maxim in our farm life that the "herd," man or boy, needed no guardian and of instruction very little. Growing up in this atmosphere, respect grew into admiration and looking back to those men of the Merse, and the far-off hills, with their solitary shielings, scarce an instance comes to mind of one failing to make good. When it came down to real skill and sheep lore, the shepherd generally knew more than the master, and in an argument the former generally got the best of it, if he was on known ground. With this kind of halo surrounding them, most of them admitted geniuses in their walk and conversation, little wonder that born and brought up among them, they probably cast over me a glamor that I have been unable to dismiss or that time has even changed in the slightest degree.

At Wedderlie, when I first recollect it, there lived and had lived for many years, a great character called Jamie Bruce. He had been shepherd on the place, but had retired, making a living by cow jobbing, and he also rented a grass park from our landlord where he kept a small flock of ewes. His cottage was called the Braeheads. It stood above a little stream and was a but and a ben. Jamie lived in the ben and the cows in the but. I have a dim recollection of it burning down one morning when Jamie saved his live stock but most of his furniture went up in smoke. It was rebuilt as a double cottage, and the cows found another home.

In those days every householder supplied a woman or boy worker for the farmer, and consequently Jamie sat rent free in a

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way. He hired a woman worker, bondager, as they were unfortunately named, at so much for the half year. He drew her pay from the farmer and any balance coming to him provided her keep and was also credited to house rent. It was a most pernicious system socially and morally, the only gainer being the farmer. It was one of the customs that died hard and the funeral came none too soon. As labor became better employed, women did not require to leave home and stayed with their parents, working from their own roof tree.

Jamie had a wealth of shepherd's lore. He lived before the days of railroads, in the days when fairs were still the bartering place for sheep and cattle, and when "drove" roads were still open across the wild moorlands of the Border. He could tell many a tale of driving stock to the old stands which are now but memories. He had attended Falkirk Tryst, All Hallow Fair at Edinburgh, driving stock from these points over Soutra Hill to the neighborhood of Wedderlie. St. Boswells, Lammas Fair at Melrose, held on the sides of the Eildons, St. James' Fair at Kelso and the Pennymuir Fairs were all household words to him. The auction marts killed them and nowadays they are but remnants of former glories. His active life had been spent in the old fashioned way.

About 1850, when he had passed his best and was partially retired, he saw a new era begin. The railroad had reached within eleven miles of his calf ground. The driving days were over, the locomotive did the work. The farm work, however, was the same and, except for a scarcity of labor in this hill district, goes on today as it did then. We got our holidays about the first days of July, and as we clipped our blackfaced sheep about the fourth or fifth of July, I generally saw this great event.

It was still the fashion for the neighbors to help one another, and the days were arranged ahead. Consequently it was a great gathering of men and dogs, and it made a mighty stir in the quiet life of the farm. At sun-up the shepherds gathered on the hill. The collies, like a cowboy on the round-up, took long sweeps circling the sheep. When they were together it looked a big flock and at last when they were driven into the buchts (dividing pens) there was great confusion and an awful noise as lambs and their mothers bleated in pathetic tones. The lambs

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had to be separated. This was a big job, as we had no dividing shute in those days. They had all to be handled over the dividing rails. John Whitelaw, who herded the low ground, a man of great strength, used to seize a lamb in each hand and drop them over the fence. And there in a close pen the poor little things, worn with anxiety and missing the care of their mothers, stood all day. When the mother came back stripped of her fleece and white as snow, you would think they would scarce recognize her, but in this case every bullet found its billet and they went contentedly away to the hillside.

The buchts were about a quarter of a mile from the buildings. In a covered shed prepared for the purpose, the shearing was done. In Lammermoor all sheep while being clipped had their feet tied and were lifted onto stools. These were about five feet long, two feet high and about two-and-a-half feet wide. Generally they were made of heather turf. The floor of the big shed, except where the sheep were confined by temporary hurdles, was carpeted with heather turf also. There on their stools sat a dozen men or more busy at work, their shears clicking and very often their tongues going. They had gathered from the four parts of the compass, from Flass on the west, Scarlaw and Rāw-burn on the north, Evelaw on the east and Cammerlaws on the south. Men of great stature, wiry, a long reach of arm, shaggy of hair, virile, sometimes dogmatic, but all mentally strong.

Most of their work, scanning the hill, was done in silence, so when they got together there was a great interchange of ideas. Just as the dawn peeped through the flickering east, Jamie Bruce wended his way to the buchts, there to do his part in the day's work. He donated that time to the farmer, part as friendship, part as a dependent cottager, last but not least for the fellowship that followed in the wake of the day's work. Bess, his collie, grown old in the service, was at his heel ready to move at the motion of the hand. When the ewes were penned they adjourned, or at least as many as were present, to the farm house and had their breakfast of porridge and milk.

What a day that was in the household! Old Nellie, the housekeeper, and the other servants were almost distracted. Over and above the usual meals for the household, a dozen or more hungry shepherds had to be provided for. Breakfast from

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six o'clock onwards, for the neighbor shepherds dropped in at all times, lunch at ten o'clock of bread and milk, dinner about half after twelve, a dram of whiskey or milk again at four o'clock, and their tea after the day's work was over. What a lot of work was done!

In this country we generally shear with the rib, but in Lammermoor it was across it. If the sheep were in good condition and the fleece well risen from the skin, which in a healthy sheep was a delicate purple, it easily fell away from the shears and was gathered up by a girl, rolled up and carried to the storage place adjoining. After this there was a yell for "buist." A branding iron, not red hot as on the range, but covered with pitch, was carried along dripping hot tar on the heather floor and stamped on the side of the sheep. The legs were untied and the ewe found her way to the buchts, there to wait rather impatiently till the flock was all shorn, when, as said above, lambs and mothers met and went quietly to the hill. There was rejoicing then as the hungry lamb met a full udder.

I have seen busy scenes on the range when a hundred cowboys with six or seven hundred horses were at work. I have watched them sweep along divides, come down through dry arroyos with bunches of panting cattle, round them up, unsaddle, catch a fresh horse and go to work on the herd. Sometimes we had to work two herds. But in miniature these sheep shearing scenes come back to memory as the busiest and merriest of gatherings. It was silent sort of work round the cattle, except when a cowboy gave a parting yell at some specially obstinate cow or steer that refused to be cut out and at last was headed towards its special bunch.

Much depends on the setting of the scene. Here under a well lighted covered shed with its carpet of heather and its homemade stools, the big, healthy looking men in homespun, the intelligent collies, the wild horned blackfaced ewes, with soft expressive eyes, the music of the shears, the merry laugh that followed a good joke, the sorrow that you felt for the bleating captives, all tended to an intensely interesting time for a young boy. One thing followed another in rapid succession. After Jamie Bruce, who had an exceedingly nippy tongue, had greeted the arrivals from neighboring hillsides, reminding one delinquent who came

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rather late that it was a poor time of night to come and do a day's work, although it was but 8 A. M., there was sure to be a collie shangie, or, in other words, a sort of free fight among the dogs.

The collie is not a fighting dog, but he makes an awful fuss about it, shows his teeth, but as a rule does little real harm. It was soon over, but went on intermittently all day. In this connection, I recollect the Free Kirk minister, the Rev. James Izzett, coming up to see the men, who were principally attendants at his church. With him was his famous Scotch terrier Bob. Bob had a reputation among fighting dogs, but the collies did not know it. Immediately on Bob's arrival there was considerable curiosity as to his anatomy and other peculiarities. A big collie, the sort of dandy of the lot, walked all around him with his tail curled over his stern. He made a feint at Bob, but he did not shift his ground.

Bob had been at other meetings of this kind before and was well skilled at the game. The other collies also began to evince a good deal of curiosity and there must have been half a dozen around him. Bob still looked unconcerned, although there was a conscious gleam in his eye. Like a good general he said little but thought a lot. After considerable growling from Bob, they made an onslaught on him. Over went Bob, but in his mouth and with his teeth fixed on it was the fore paw of the largest collie. There was a yell of pain and the big dog was soon pulling away from the rest, taking Bob with him. He tumbled over and over, but Bob stuck like a burr. The more noise, the deeper went Bob's teeth into the paw. At last he let go, the collies slunk into corners and he was cock of the walk. There was no further argument.

During the day there was many a breezy discussion. If Wat Stobie, the old shepherd at Lanton Lees, a farm which my family held for many years, was there, then there was sure to be a lot of scrapping. Wat's sheep were, according to his idea, the best in Lammermoor. He had a better breed of collies and as these facts were stoutly upheld by the redoubtable Wat, it gave rise to a lot of good natured chaff. Another favorite subject of discussion took place betwixt the wet and dry contingents. Bruce and Stobie agreed in one way that a dram was an excellent

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thing, with most of the others opposing them. Whiskey or no whiskey, these men were all sober minded, clean morally and keen at their calling.

In after years, I used to attend and take part in the clippings at a large Cheviot farm we got a lease of in the early seventies. There we had nothing but Cheviot sheep. They had beautiful fleeces, fine in quality, but deficient in weight. There was no tying there, you handled them loose. After you had rounded the neck you ran your shears across the rib and for the first few days after it looked a bit incongruous. These shepherds were just as high class as their neighbors.

It was harder work in Cheviot than in Lammermoor. It was steeper, there was more bare ground and less shelter. They had not the heather in such quantities and it was much more difficult to grow trees there and make artificial fields, the local word for shelters.

About the 15th of August we weaned our lambs from the Leicester Cheviots, and this was a great occasion. We drew all our sheep from the fields and the lowland hill land to the buchts and there about six-thirty in the morning the weaning began. Every lamb was handled by hand. First the wethers and ewes were separated into big pens. Then the shott wether lambs were taken and sold at home or sent to market. The tops, probably four hundred head, were sent to our low country farm and finished there. The top of the ewe lambs were kept for breeding purposes. A neighbor farmer from the low country came up to buy the balance, except the very tail end. He got up about noon, looked over the bunch, and then after dinner when the toddy was fairly started, bargaining began and it generally lasted till he went away about four o'clock. Sometimes the bargain was not struck till he was in his gig. Over and above he always took a year's credit, but I guess the interest was taken care of in the price. Jamie, who had been busy all morning helping the other herds, generally called at the farm house in the afternoon and had his drop of spirits while the discussion went on.

As I write, these days come back in vivid reality. Time never seems to blur, far less blot them out. The lessons absorbed amid this peasant life have been to me of untold value. No name so rich as that of experience, of living among actual scenes

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and gathering honey from every flower you came across. When we took over the lease of the above farm in 1853, old Willie Whitelaw was the herd on the lower hirsle. After four years, his son filled his shoes. He left on account of his health. A few years afterwards his son came to the same place and finished out the lease. For fifty-two years there was a Whitelaw at the Washing House, the name of the little cottage they lived in. It was the place where in old days the farm folks did their washing, just as the French and Italians clean their clothes, etc., on the Riviera. On the blackfaced hirsle Willie Anderson did duty for forty-seven years, and he is still living in a green old age at the village of Westruther close by the scene of his life work.

Only a week ago he wrote me a letter telling of his eighty-five years and still hearty, able to attend his beloved kirk. Touch, oh God, with gentle hand this servant of Thine whose work was 'midst the purple heather, but whose heart was ever soaring upwards!



Winter Scene
and Scotch
Shepherds



Shepherd
and Collies



Blackfaced Shéep in Winter



Number Six

"I was with Hercules, and Cadmus, once
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear
With hounds of Sparta; never did I hear
Such gallant chiding; for, besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, every region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry: I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder."

SPORT is intuitive to the Border people. It comes down from the old reiver days when might was right and stealing from your neighbor far from sinful. Mavericking in the West was child's play to the manner in which the Lowland Scot crossed the Border and appropriated his neighbor's cattle. My forefathers used to smuggle whiskey from the little town of Eyemouth to Holy Island and cache the firewater in the sands near to the sacred spot where in old days prior and abbess made their saintly homes. Money was the main object, but there was a sporting chance about it. A boundary wall or stream made a tariff fence, but years ago that disappeared.

Yet today the Scotch tongue differs from the Northumbrian accent and a stranger to step from one to the other would think they were different countries. All of this country is devoted to agricultural pursuits. Outside of a few coal pits the population is devoted to the plough, to live stock and the kindred industries that hang around a bucolic people. As I have said in former articles, simplicity is the rule among those peasants. Thrift is found in the farm houses, while the landed proprietors, having had a taste of London life and other world openings, have not as a rule preserved their simplicity or kept their bank accounts well replenished. Then there is the great middle class, the farmer, the retired merchant, the well doing storekeeper, the lawyer, doctor, parson, etc., who have probably more freedom and independence than any other class. The grand result of this mixture of healthy, simple and in most cases thrifty individuals is a splendid lot of people, the backbone of a country's wealth, more, still, its manhood. The city draws on it freely, gets fresh blood that invigorates the urban population. I make these remarks leading

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up to a phase of the life in those Borders which has done much to keep the men and women also vigorous, stalwart and clean in their habits, for genuine sport acts for the best in both the mind and body.

The Border ploughman, on account of his vocation, which is constant exercise with long hours, does not get much chance to exercise his energies in this line. He is fond, however, of playing quoits, and he is ever ready to nip a hare or rabbit when he sees no danger of being caught; in fact, there is a strong streak of the poaching habit in his nature, not so much for the gain as the pure devilment it produces, for it is a game of chance.

This Borderland is the home of sport. It is equipped for it. The town of Kelso, as I have said many a time, is a center for all kinds of sport. You can hunt the fox six days a week while living there. It stands by the shores of the River Tweed, a salmon river of world-wide fame. Away some fifteen miles are mellow moorlands, redolent of heather and grouse. In the vale lands are endless coveys of partridges, an innumerable number of hares and rabbits, and amid its pleasant pinewoods the beautiful pheasant finds a congenial home. Then it has a labyrinth of trouting streams that come wandering down from green or purple hillsides, through pleasant farms, all the waters of the beautiful vale falling into the North Sea at Berwick on Tweed, whose grey walls and red roofs bring back memories of the sunny days of youth.

At Kelso there is also a race course where in autumn days touter, horse jockey, pickpocket and some other shady characters mingle freely with the quiet going folks of the neighborhood who turn out in gala attire. I have never understood, and I suppose it will always be a sealed book to me, how a dapper duke, a Scottish landlord, either peer or commoner, and his respectable tenant can afford to rub shoulders with the above tarnished gentry. You can't change the leopard's spots and it is impossible to overturn the Britisher's love of sport. He takes a sporting chance at those race meetings, both socially and morally, but he goes back to business or pleasure next morning and proceeds on his path sedately and with decorum.

At a Scottish farm your first introduction to a sporting career is generally rat catching. There is generally a good

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terrier in your father's possession, and as he is imbued with a proper spirit, you become pals and work together. I followed this well worn path. When an old stack of grain was being carted to the mill, the other farm boys and I were always present stick in hand knocking mice on the head with "Tear 'em," our terrier, watching for rats.

As every round of sheaves was pitched to the cart and we got nearer the bottom of the stack, the more intense was the excitement. The last round of sheaves was lifted cautiously, one by one. Sometimes the bottom of the stack was a regular rat pit. We generally had some neighbor terriers with us and few of the rats got away. If they were very numerous and a big kill was expected, sheets were held round the stack and then the rat had scarce a fighting chance. To us boys the rat catcher who came once a year to clean up the place of those vermin was a great man. He had two or three terriers, several ferrets, a lot of traps, and some of them that caught rats alive. and he had a sporting paraphernalia that was attractive to us country lads.

Every morning the catch of the previous day was laid out in a row for my father to see and count. "Ned the Rat," one of the many rat catchers whom I remember, was a hard looking customer. In later life I have always compared him in my mind with Dick Hatteraick in "Guy Mannering." He had a diabolical look about him, and as his vocation called for silence and a soft pedal, he came upon you unawares and gave you a start as if a ghost had appeared. The mole catcher, on the other hand, who used to work for us, was a mild mannered, prudent man, but his style of sport did not appeal to the boys of the farm.

On Saturday afternoons I used to go over to a neighboring farm where a boy of my age lived. He was a nephew of the farmer and his maiden sisters. The farm was away from the main road and was as quiet a spot as any hermit would wish for. It lay on the banks of the Tweed and was a fertile spot. There were rich meadow lands by the river side. The square farm house stood in a pleasant garden full of old fashioned flowers and guarded by stone walls where peach and apricot trees were carefully trained. Inside there was a trim, rather prosaic drawing room with a bank of house flowers that spread incense through it. This was seldom used, only when very important folks came to

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call, and a fire was only built on state occasions. The useful room of the house was a good sized dining room which was also a sitting room and library. There the family congregated and spent their days. It was a sunny, cheerful place with old fashioned furniture, chairs and sofa of horsehair and a great mahogany sideboard. Over the mantle-piece was a row of glass jars with hysons in them. In the bow window was an iron and wire stand with fuchias, geraniums, etc.

In this scented air canaries sang and the two dear old ladies who lived with a very quiet reserved bachelor brother, whiled away a quiet and somewhat uninteresting life. The outside folks would call it so, but they had their pleasures, their hopes and an everlasting faith which they put to a strong test every Sabbath morning by riding to church in a "noddly," a springless carriage that hurt your body but helped digestion.

A ravine ran through the farm. Here and by the river bank were lots of rabbits. The boy had a fond companion in a big red curly coated retriever. This dog and our terrier were great cronies and they understood the game of one hunting a bunny out of a thicket which had a runway into it and one out. The terrier bolted the rabbit and the big dog got it. Then we would carry a spade and occasionally dig a burrow. Altogether we had a glorious time. In spring we would rob nests, blow eggs and otherwise destroy the homes of defenceless birds.

One nest I could never rob. The gentle lark I always passed up. The memory of its song overnight still lingered with me. This bird of the wilderness, as James Hogg expresses it, appeals to your heart and makes it sinful to touch its cosy nest. But the carrion crow, the magpie, the hawk and such other birds' nests were ruthlessly harried. What chances we took climbing those trees! All too soon we were trained to use a gun and it is second nature to handle one.

The average American boy misses this training. By the age of twelve I was getting expert with a double barrelled shot gun. We first got hold of a single barrel very indifferent fowling piece, and then when our fathers were absent we borrowed their guns for the day. And so I grew up like the neighbor boys with a perfect command of firearms, and although never

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a crack shot, I can still make a decent performance on the moor or at the end of a wood when pheasant fly fast down wind.

But in my early days the best, and those that are still pendant in my mind, were spent by the little streams that come meandering down from the moss hags of Lammermoor and Cheviot. Since then I have wandered by their side, waded or jumped across them. They look small and puny and what were waterfalls then are less than three or four feet in reality, except at the College Linn, near to Heathpool, Northumberland. But a glamor hangs around those days.

Many a morning have I walked from Wedderlie to Dye-water, a distance of four or five miles. How fine the air felt, how springy the turf or heather; the air was alive with the worshipping lark or the screaming curlew and then at the Watch Water you wanted to put up your rod and have a try by its whispering streams and little pools, but with stern resolve you kept going ahead to the larger stream. You half ran, half walked when you had mounted the divide betwixt the two streams, and had your head downhill. Below you was the sinuous river like a thread of silver, passing below a whinstone bridge past a little cottage away among hills that echoed the cry of the cuckoo.

Today, as I write, the whole scene is moving before me. The sparkling stream that came rolling in gentle cadence over boulders, lashing itself into wavelets that had fringes of silver foam, then as if tired of its mad course, it sunk into quiescent pools and swirled gently against some worn cliffs that had stood the wear of countless ages. Then it broke from there over another reach, making music as it went. By its banks was a wealth of wild flowers and the air was alive with dragon and butterflies. In those days the stream was full of trout and an expert fisherman could always get a decent basket. Generally in the morning we would fish up stream, using worms as bait. You threw your line above a big rock, it circled round and it fell into somewhat still water. Generally a good sized trout was ready for it. Few of them were big enough to need playing with, you brought them to the bank side and then jerked them on to it. In a clear stream this style of fishing is deadly, but I never cared for it so much as when in the afternoon with a westerly breeze we fished down stream with fly.

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It was no great trick to kill fifty or sixty trout in a day, or even up to a hundred. It was sport and at the same time it kept the table going in an out of the way place where a butcher was unknown. Fishing is rather a selfish sport. You have to be alone and wish to be left severely so. You are jealous if you see a neighbor plying his rod near you. Away by Dye side you had it to yourself. Towards afternoon you dropped into Jamie Smith's comfortable cottage at Byreclench and had a cup of tea to hearten you on the way home.

Jamie was the Duke of Roxburgh's head shepherd at the above place. It was a sort of mutual admiration society up there. The Duke had a good servant and Jamie had a very good and indulgent employer. They only met about the 12th of August, grouse shooting time, and had very little occasion to quarrel. Jamie was a grand crack and many a pleasant hour I spent with him.

Shooting, in a way the counterpart of fishing, is exactly opposite in one respect. It is a congenial sport. You seldom go alone. The company is a part of the play. The result is that it is thoroughly unselfish. There is an etiquette about it, a code of sporting manners which you must acquire when you are young. I was fortunate in imbibing this from a gamekeeper who knew his business from A to Z. I always look back at his guidance and guardianship in this field as one of the big assets of my life, both in business and in sport, for if you know the latter it will strongly influence the former.

In the days we write of hares and rabbits were still reserved by the landlord for his own shooting and trapping. In other words, while the tenant fed them, the laird got the sport and revenue. This led up to endless disputes and heartburnings. On the Roxburgh estate the rabbits were not specially reserved and the tenants could always shoot them for pleasure and the pot. As many of the British landlords were impecunious, game became a source of revenue instead of what it was intended to be, a sporting asset.

A tenant might take a nineteen-year lease of a place carrying at his entry a fair head of game. They might then be allowed to multiply and become a great burden on the place. The proprietors of land could not see the coming storm. Slowly but

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surely public opinion centered against them and laws were passed which gave the tenants an inalienable right to the ground game. Now the landlord has the feathers, the tenant the fur, but even yet with the rage for game there is much trouble where pheasants are hand reared in great numbers and turned loose at a certain age to feed themselves. But so far as we were concerned, we enjoyed all the freedom necessary to follow up our sporting proclivities with the gun. In the long summer evenings when the twilight came slowly, after the farm work was over, many a score of young rabbits came to hand, and in winter when the larder was empty we used the ferrets in the burrows and this class of snap shooting, as they darted from one hole to another, provided splendid sport.

The fox, however, is the animal that provides *the* sport of Merrie England and Scotland also. One winter's day at Whit-some school, when the midday hour had set us free, the hounds with their followers, most of them in scarlet, had passed near by. Along with some other boys, we started off. No more school that day, and next morning a severe lecture from the kind old master. He gave me a letter to my father, but I suppose he had been there himself as nothing more was said. Then, and even today, when I see a fox it sets me afire, at least the sporting blood in me, and when he breaks cover, I have to follow Mr. Jorrocks's advice and count twenty before holloaing to the huntsman that he is away.

My hunting career was begun on the Shetland pony that carried me to school, and my first professor in the art was the great Lord Wemyss. He was a rich East Lothian proprietor who devoted his life to sport. He was not only an A1 shot, but he was a fearless rider, hunting his own hounds till he was nearly eighty years of age. He was a man of marvelous activities and immensely popular. He hunted four days a week, Monday and Friday in North Northumberland, and Tuesday and Saturday in Berwickshire. Thus he took in both sides of the Border. His hounds made the welkin ring amid the scenes where the Bride of Lammermoor played her part, while southwards he drew Flodden Hill, passing by many a time the well of Sybil Grey, and many a time his pack finding at Yearle whin, ran straight to big Cheviot where the fox could get into rocks that defied any earth stopper to evict him.

OLD DAYS RECALLED

In the realms of sport nothing comes up to riding to hounds. It is the most fascinating of pursuits and develops traits in a man's character that might otherwise lie dormant, for you must have courage, resolution, coolness, patience and a knowledge that can only be gained by experience. Personally, I have always had to labor under the great disadvantage of a heavy weight. The professional huntsman weighs about 140 pounds, while my normal weight is 225 pounds. This is a tremendous handicap with the result that my constant aim was to offset it by skill as much as possible. You cannot cure, but you can alleviate this burden of *avoirdu pois*.

The aim of the good horseman when riding to hounds is to be near as possible to the pack and yet never press them. A hound when on the line of a fox is easily disturbed. He must be allowed to work out his own part of the business and should never be interfered with till the huntsman sees he is fairly at fault, when aid is necessary. With me, therefore, it was necessary to watch closely the leading hounds of the pack, if they were running fast to guess more or less what direction they were pointing. This is not a good plan for the ordinary well mounted man, but a heavy weight has to cut corners. His eye must ever be roaming over the country in front of him to search out the weak spots in any big fence that lies in his way. There come times when he must charge big places, trusting a good deal to luck in getting over, and you generally do get over. A very small error in judgment loses you a lot of ground, therefore amid all this excitement you must be cool, calculating, ever edging to or from the pack as occasion requires, and then when necessary turn away from nothing that is jumpable.

Till I was seventeen years of age I kept on riding a pony or a cob. It will be forty-seven years ago October that my father gave me a horse and my boyhood days were left behind. Those wondrous days that come but once in a life time!

